Aug. 3, 1926. 1,594,359

T. W. ESTABROOK

PRACTICE BOARD

Filed Dec. 4, 1924

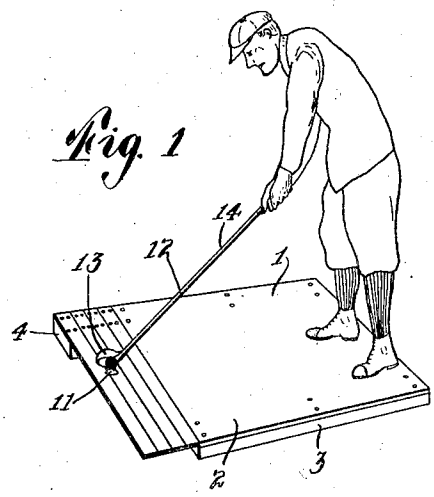


Fig. 1

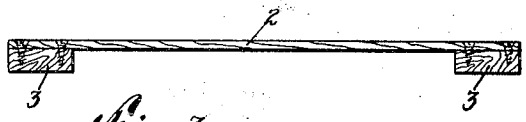


Fig. 3

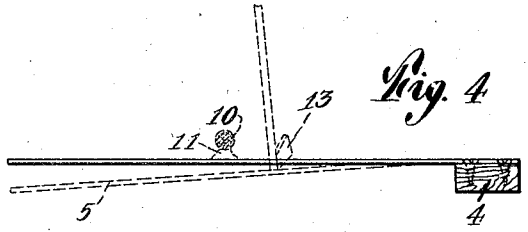


Fig. 4

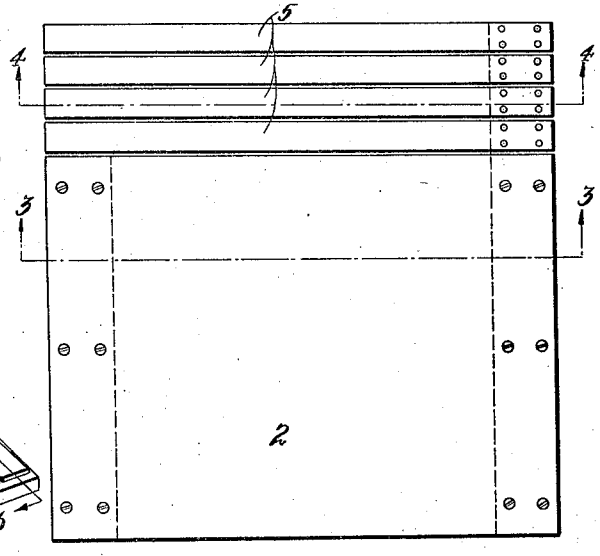


Fig. 2

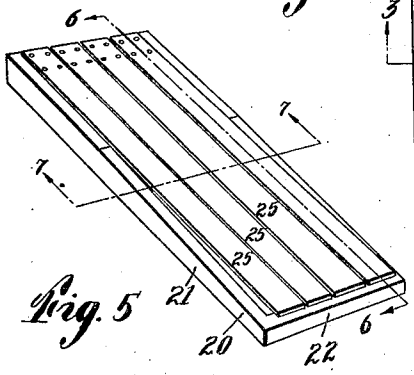


Fig. 5

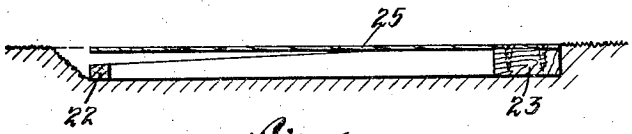


Fig. 6

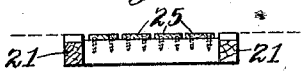


Fig. 7

Inventor
Thomas W. Estabrook
by Hughes Brown Thornburg & Cleary
Attys.

Patented Aug. 3, 1926. 1,594,359

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS W. ESTABROOK, OF BERLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

PRACTICE BOARD.

Application filed December 4, 1924. Serial No. 753,860.

This invention relates to devices for facilitating the development of skill by practice under conditions closely approximating those under which that skill is to be exercised and where the exact conditions are not readily attainable or are not desired. More particularly it relates to a device for facilitating practice in the game of golf, more particularly as regards the correct handling and manipulating of the clubs used in striking and driving the ball. In the game the ball is driven by striking it with a head of a suitably shaped club, the club having a shaft which is grasped by the player, the ball resting either directly on the ground or on a small mound or tee of sand or the like. The novice may experience considerable difficulty in properly striking the ball, the head of the club failing to strike the ball in such a manner as to cause the ball to travel in the desired direction. When it passes too low the club head may strike the ground instead of the ball, digging an unsightly hole and displacing the dirt or sod, and particularly if the ground be hard or the stroke particularly poor, making liable the breakage of the club shaft.

According to the present invention, therefore, means in place of the ground for supporting the ball are employed which may yield when inadvertently struck by the club so that no ground is torn up and the chance of the club shank being broken is minimized, and yet which normally supports the ball in a manner sufficiently closely simulating the unyielding ground that by the use of this device the player's eyes and muscles receive the same training in striking the ball that they would receive under normal playing conditions. It also makes possible indoor practice at times when actual out door play is impossible due to season or weather conditions.

For a more complete understanding of this invention reference may be had to the accompanying drawings in which—

Figure 1 shows in perspective a player using the device of this invention.

Figure 2 is a plan of the device.

Figures 3 and 4 are sections on lines 3—3 and 4—4, respectively of Figure 1, Figure 4 showing in dotted lines the position of the parts when struck by the club.

Figure 5 is a perspective of a modified construction.

Figures 6 and 7 are detail sections on lines 6—6 and 7—7, respectively of Figure 5.

Referring first to Figures 1 to 4, the device as shown comprises a platform 1 having a solid upper face 2 over a portion thereof supported on marginal frame elements 3 above the level of the ground or floor on which the device may be placed in substantially horizontal position. This portion 2 furnishes a substantially rigid support on which the player may stand, as illustrated in Figure 1. One of the frame elements 3 is extended beyond the edge of the platform portion 2, as shown at 4 and to this frame element are fixed the ends of a series of resilient strips or slats 5 of wood or other suitable material so that normally they are supported substantially in a plane with the top of the platform portion 1. The opposite ends of these slats, however, are unsupported and being made of resilient material they may yield downwardly independently of each other to substantially the dotted line position shown in Figure 4 until the free end thereof strikes the ground, or other surface on which the device is supported. The object to be struck may be a ball of any material desired, but preferably for practice purposes some fairly light material such as wood or pulp which will not travel far when struck. This ball is shown at 10 supported on a suitable tee 11 on the slatted portion of the platform at some distance from the support 4. The player then takes his position as shown in Figure 1 and strikes at the ball with the striking implement or club 12. In case he strikes too low the head 13 of the club strikes the upper face of the slatted portion of the platform, the particular slats being struck yielding downwardly as shown in Figure 4, thus cushioning the blow and deflecting the club in a manner to relieve the shank 14 thereof from the shock of sudden impact so that it is saved from injury.

In some cases it may be desired to dispense with the stationary portion 2 of the platform, utilizing instead the surface of the ground. In such cases the device may be built as shown in Figures 5 to 7, comprising a rectangular open frame 20 composed of side pieces 21 and end pieces 22 and 23 and slats 25. Each of the slats 25 is fixed to one of the end pieces as 23 and extends over spaced from the end piece 22,

and the side pieces 20 are preferably tapered in height so as to be substantially level with the upper face of the slats at the end piece 23 and at the opposite ends substantially level with the upper face of the end piece 22. This device is buried in the ground sufficiently so that the slatted platform is substantially on a level therewith, preferably the ground being cut away on a gradual slope about the end piece 22 and the adjacent portion of the side pieces, as in Figure 6. The practice ball is placed on the slatted platform in the manner hereinbefore described and if the stroke of the club is too low, one or more of the slats will be struck with the head thereof and yield downwardly within the frame 20 in the same manner as the slats 5. By forming the yielding portion of slats, only those slats which are actually struck are deflected, so that the resistance imposed thereby to the swing of the club is less than if the entire width of the platform were to be effected.

Having thus described certain embodiments of this invention it should be evident to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from its spirit or scope as defined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A device of the class described comprising a platform for supporting an object to be struck by an implement, said platform comprising a series of elements independently downwardly yieldable when struck by said implement.

2. A device of the class described comprising a platform for supporting an object to be struck by an implement, said platform comprising a series of slats each supported in an elevated position at one end and free to yield downwardly at the other end when struck by said implement.

3. A device of the class described comprising a substantially horizontal platform comprising a series of resilient slats arranged side by side, and a member to which one end of each slat is fixed to support it in an elevated position, said slats being unsupported at their opposite ends to be yieldable downwardly under pressure exerted on the upper face thereof at a distance from said fixed ends.

4. A device of the class described comprising a platform, means for supporting said platform in substantially horizontal position, said platform comprising a series of resilient slats arranged side by side, and means for so supporting said slats that portions thereof may yield downwardly when subjected to pressure.

5. A device of the class described comprising a platform, means for supporting said platform in substantially horizontal position, said platform having a portion of its upper face relatively rigid and another portion of said face composed of a series of resilient slats each supported at one end only, their opposite ends being downwardly yieldable when subjected to pressure.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature.

THOMAS W. ESTABROOK